



**THE SYMPTOMS OF SCHIZOPHRENIA EXPERIENCED BY NINA SAYERS
IN FILM BLACK SWAN**

Journal Article

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The Symptoms of Schizophrenia Experienced by Nina Sayers in Film *Black Swan*.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is entitled *The Symptoms of Schizophrenia Experienced by Nina Sayers in Film Black Swan*. In conducting the research, descriptive method is used to find the symptoms of schizophrenia experience by the main character. Structural and psychological approaches were applied to analyze the data. Structural approach was used to analyze structural elements such as plot, general description of the main character, conflict experienced by the main character and setting described in the film. Then, the psychological approach was used to analyze the symptoms of schizophrenia experienced by the main character. Based on the data analysis in chapter IV, it can be concluded that there are five dramatic structures consists of exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and Resolution. There are two general description of the main character; virgin and fragile girl. As the main character, she also experiences external and internal conflict. The external conflict experienced by Nina Sayers are her conflict against Erica (her mother), Thomas (art director), and also Lily (her competitor). The setting in Black swan film is divided into two, setting of time; in the morning and evening. Setting of places found in this film is in the Nina's house, in the train, in the studio, on the stage also in the bar. The dramatic structure shows the sequences of the story happens. The general descriptions, conflicts and settings in the film become a trigger of the symptoms of schizophrenia. Nina is the deal casting for the white swan, but the other side she should embody the sensual black swan. She got trouble as the black swan, it is makes Nina has the symptoms of schizophrenia.

Keywords: *Black Swan, Hallucination, Psychology, Schizophrenia*

INTRODUCTION

Family is the first social interaction of a child, these interactions affect the growth of a child. The parenting system affects to the growth of a child. Inappropriate parenting such as obsession and possessive can affect a child's aggressive behavior. The aggressive behavior such as introvert, unsociable, depressed, and even stress. It can harm him or herself and others. This causes psychological disorder such as schizophrenia.

Schizophrenia is one of the social phenomena that occur in the modern society. Schizophrenia is the condition in which a person is unable to distinguish the reality. The symptoms that occur in every individual are different. The symptoms of schizophrenia are caused by a various external and internal factors on the sufferer. The external factor can occur because a suffer is experiencing pressure from surrounding people, also social isolation. Then internal factor also happens because of genetic factors, or obsession even possessive. This happens in a film *Black Swan* which was released in 2008.

The film *Black Swan* takes a background story of *Swan Lake*, which is has the fairytale becomes real in life. The story tells of a dancer who has a dream as a main character as the white swan, named Nina Sayers (Natalie Portman). The art director (Vincent Cassel) in the opening of new season wants a new swan queen who can embody the black and the white. Finally, Nina became the new swan queen for the new season, but Nina got in trouble with the black swan role. It happens because Nina is a reflection of the white swan. From there, she got a wide range of pressure. Nina always feels that Lily (Milla Kunis) as her competitor. That makes Nina life changes drastically and get experiences outside her consciousness. The genre of the film is psychological thriller film, because of the film indicates level of the symptoms appears in this movie. This film also received five Academy Award nominations and Portman won Best Actress, also Aronofsky nominated for the Best Director then the film is nominated for Best Picture.

This thesis discusses the symptoms of schizophrenia experienced by Nina Sayers and the factor of the symptoms can happen.

The researcher will examine on this topic because of schizophrenia become a social phenomenon in society.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

The method which used in this paper is descriptive qualitative. The method uses sentences and words to describe the data on analysis. According to Endraswara (2004:16) "The research is analyzed as descriptive, it is describe by words or figures if necessary, and it does not describe the numerical analysis." Moreover, the researcher analyzed the film with psychological approach to describe about the symptoms of schizophrenia of the main character Nina Sayers.

Unit of Analysis

The researcher divided the analysis of data into two types, intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Intrinsic element is used to analyze general description,

conflicts experienced, and settings described by the main character and the dramatic structure of the film. Extrinsic element in this film to analyzing by using psychological approach to explained schizophrenia symptoms of the main character.

Method of Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed general description, conflict, setting of the main character in film Darren Aronofsky, *Black Swan*. Finding the data was the way to find the structural approach such as :

- a. Analysing general description to analysis the characteristic of the main character, appearance and etc.
- b. Analysing conflict to indentify internal or external conflict happen to the main character.
- c. Analysing setting to indentify place, time or setting social in the film.

Moreover, the researcher used Psychological Approach to describe the symptoms of schizophrenia experienced of the main character. This was done by describing and explaining the symptoms of schizophrenia.

DISCUSSION

Exposition

Nina Sayers is a ballerina who dedicated her life to ballet, because of the obsession her mother (Erica) is a former ballet dancer. One day Nina Sayers told her mother that she had a dream dsnced the white swan. The art director promised to Nina would parcipate her in the new season. Her mother said that Nina is already too long and become the most dedicated dancer in the company. The dream appears become the first trigger of her hallucination.

Data no 1



Figure 1. Exposition

Rising Action

The artistic director Thomas Leroy looking for a new season swan queen is able to embody the white and black swans. Nina is one of the chosen to the audition. Thomas is little disappointed with Nina because she is only able to dance the white swan but not the black one. The next day Nina meet Thomas to ask the role, but Thomas said that he had chose Veronica. Thomashowever did not let Nina just left and told Nina that she is actually capable but too weak. Nina is chosen finally. Throughout the practice Nina get enormous pressure, to dance as a black swan. Nina feels that Lily as her competitor, and Thomas are very interested in Lily (the new dancer from San Francisco). The night, before the performance, Nina saw that Thomas and Lily have sex. Then, Nina came home she shocked and had dangerous hallucination. Nina saw her mother painting moves and laughs to her. Until she felt that she transformed into a swan. Suddenly, she passed out until the morning. Her mother announced the company that Nina was ill. Thomas has asked Lily to replace Nina, but not too long Nina arrived then Nina do the performance. At the stage Nina saw Lily seductive the prince, it make Nina not focus. Then she falls on the stage. Thomas was angry with the accident. In this part of the story the conflict and pressures happens to Nina. This indicated Nina begins has the symptoms, the levels of hallucinations appears in this part.

Data no 2

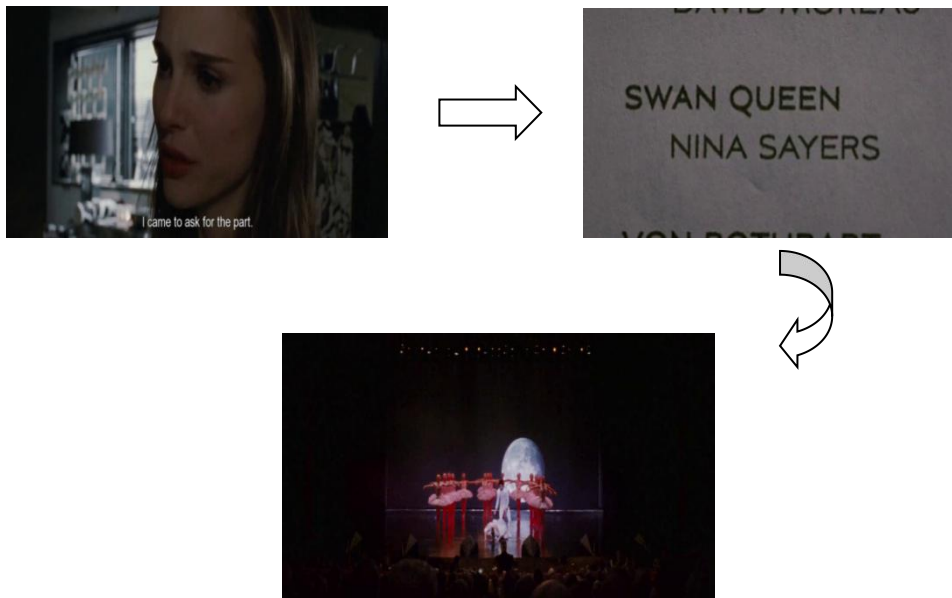


Figure 2. Rising Action

Climax

Arriving in her room, suddenly she saw Lily wearing black swan costume and trying replace her. They fight, because Nina does not want anyone to

replace her. Then she stabs Lily with piece of the glass. After that, she feels something strange in her self. This part is when Nina has a dangerous hallucinations.

Data no 3

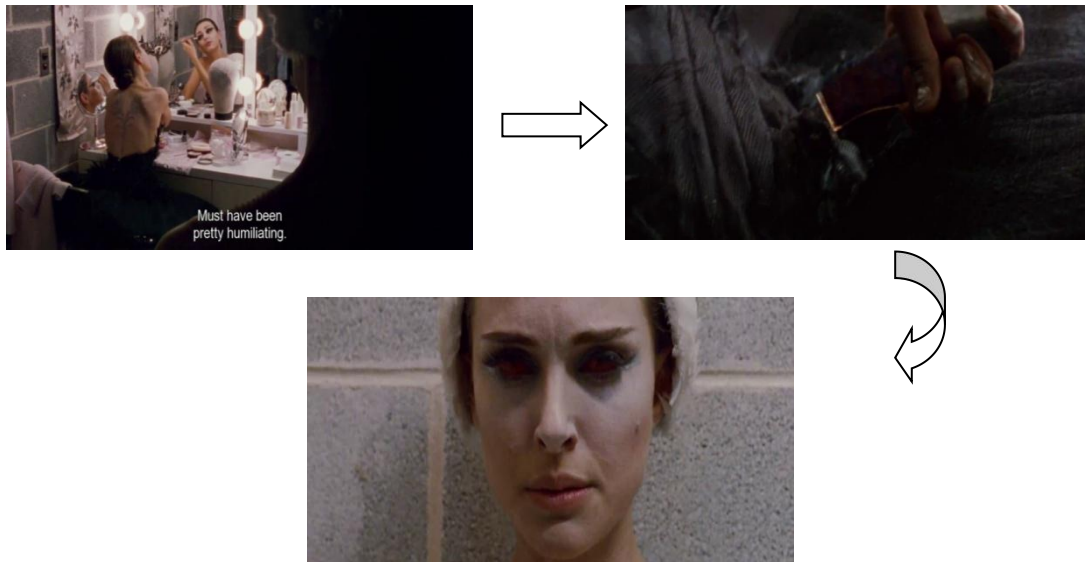


Figure 3. Climax

Falling Action

The audience was very impressed with the Nina's performance as the black swans that make the entire audience standing for her. Arriving in her room to replace her costume, someone knocked on the door, and it turns out that Lily would like to congratulate on her performance that makes Nina stunned. Nina felt that had killed lily and all of it was just hallucinations. When she realized that she has killing herself. This is when Nina realized that all of things happens to her is only her hallucinates.

Data no 4

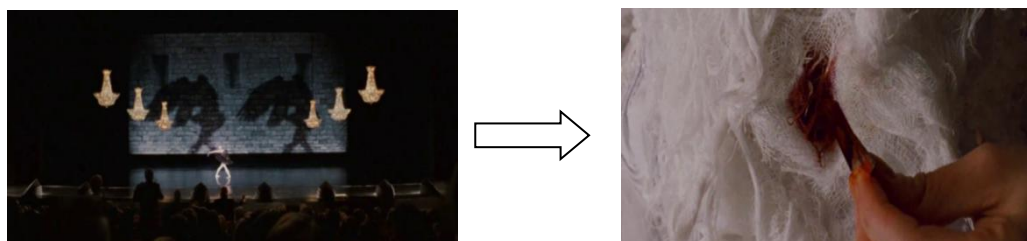


Figure 4. Falling Action

Resolution

Nina successfully completed the play, but in the end she lost her life to get what is expected is perfection. This is the end of her hallucinations.

Data no 5



Figure 5. Resolution

Virgin Girl

According to dictionary.com is a person who has never had a sexual intercourse or an unmarried girl or woman. In this care character's of Nina is a virgin girl because she never had sex before. It can be shown when Thomas tries to take a conversation about it. But in this convertation Nina's lied to Thomas because she looked shy to Thomas. Such as a virgin girls Nina feels shy because she knows that become a virgin in the modern life is nonsense, so she cover it from Thomas.

Data no 20

"I thought it would be good to talk about the role. Ground us a little. Yeah. I don't there to be any boundaries between us. No, me neither. Good. So... You got a boyfriend? No. And you had many in the past? A few, but no one serious. You're not a virgin, are you? No. So there's nothing to be embarrassed about. And you enjoy making love? Excuse me? Oh, come on. Sex. Do you enjoy it? We need to be able to talk about this. I got a little homework assignment for you. Go home and touch yourself. Live a little. (Black Swan, 00:36:14 - 00:37:24).



Figure 6. The Conversation between Nina and Thomas

External Conflict

Against Her Mother

Firstly, it happens when Nina and her mother are talking in a room, her mother asks Nina about Thomas, because she is worried about Nina that Thomas has taken advantage. Her mother does not want if Nina makes a mistake same like she did, when career is concerned but she lost it. And Nina feels that she is already 28 years old, she now what should she do, but she does not dare to say.

Data no 27

“Has he tried anything with you? He has a reputation. I have a right to be concerned, Nina. You've been staying late so many nights, rehearsing. I hope he isn't taking advantage, that's all. He's not. Good. I just don't want you to make the same mistake I did. Thanks. Not like that. I just mean as far as my career was concerned. What career? The one I gave up to have you. You were 28. So? And only in the... only what? Nothing. What? Nothing. How's your skin? It's fine. Are we leaving “it alone? Mmm-hmm. Let me see. Take off your shirt.” (Black Swan, 00:55:50-00:57:02).



Figure 9. The Conversation Between Nina and Her Mother

Internal Conflict

In the morning when Nina went to companies using the train she sees someone like herself. For a few moments she was always looking towards the woman who wore a black jacket with a shawl. When Nina rubbed his hair, then the woman is doing the same thing it seems. Nina lost her, since the ferry went down in the South but Nina in 72 roads.

Data no 8

"This is a Downtown 1 train to South Ferry. Next stop, 72nd Street. Stand clear of the closing doors, please." (Black Swan, 00:05:36-00:05:45)



Figure 17. The woman Like Nina

Setting of Place

Nina's House

Nina is always at home, it can be seen from her utterance when she wakes up, has breakfast with her mother. After that, she goes to the companies and then returns home to sleep. She is always with her mother.

Data no 6

"I had the craziest dream last night. I was dancing the White Swan. It was different choreography, though. It was more like the Bolshoi's. It was the prologue, when Rothbart casts his spell. Look how pink! So pretty. Pretty! You're in a good mood. Mmm-hmm. He promised to feature me more this season." (Black Swan, 00:03:55 - 00:04:34)



Figure 31. Nina Practices in the morning

In The Morning

Nina wakes up in the morning, she tells her mother that she had a dream. That she danced as the white swan. Nina always warms up before she goes to the company and breakfast with her mother.

Data no 7

"I had the craziest dream last night. I was dancing the White Swan. It was different choreography, though. It was more like the Bolshoi's. It was the prologue, when Rothbart casts his spell. Look how pink! So pretty. Pretty!" (Black Swan, 00:03:55 - 00:04:29.



Figure 37. Nina Warm Up In The Morning

Symptoms of Schizophrenia Experienced

Hallucination

The first time when Nina was at the bridge, she saw a woman wearing a black jacket. The women used cell phones as what she did. Not too long, they crossed paths, when Nina saw a woman she was surprised that the women were similar to her. Nina saw once again, but the woman was not someone who was similar as herself. This happens after Nina asks to Thomas the role. She get the role finally, she thinks that she only capable to dance as the white swan. That is make the hallucination happen because she sold transform as the black swan.

Data no 15

(Black Swan, 00:15:31 – 00:15:48)

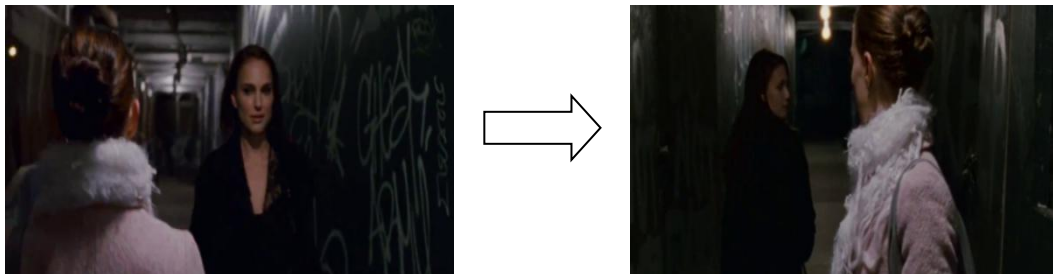


Figure 41. Nina is Hallucination on the Cross bridge

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis in chapter 4, it can be concluded that there are two general descriptions of three external conflicts experienced by the main character, four kinds of settings described in the film. The symptoms of schizophrenia experienced by the main character is hallucination.

The hallucination can happen because of Nina is a virgin and fragile girl who wants a freedom of her life. Nina cannot realize because of her mother's obsession. Her mother's obsession is that Nina becomes a great dancer in the company, which makes Nina only concerned with it. Nina becomes an unsociable person and an introverted person. In her daily life, she always focuses on being a dancer, which can be seen from who she interacts with and also the setting in the film.

The interaction appears to be a conflict between external and internal conflict. The conflict happens to Nina because it becomes the trigger of her hallucination, because Nina gets hard pressures from the people around her. The conflict between Nina and her mother because of her mother wants Nina to become a perfect girl to get the role of the White Swan. On the other side, the art director wants Nina not only to be the White Swan but she should transform into the Black Swan. Also Lily, Nina feels that Lily is her competitor who wants her role. In the story of Swan Lake, Nina is the White Swan and her mother is like a guardrail with the outside world. Also, the art director is the prince and Lily is the Black Swan who wants to steal the prince from her. But the director makes this film in real life.

The setting of Nina such as Nina's house, in the studio, in the train, and in the bar also being a trigger of hallucination, because Nina is like a trap around the places in the film. In the story of Swan Lake, the White Swan lives in a place that does not connect to the outside world. The setting of time such as in the morning, evening, and event at night also becomes a trigger of hallucination. In the morning, Nina starts all the activities and there are many conflicts that happen because of the pressures of her. Start from the evening when Nina gets tired with the activities and the

pressure happens all the day. The condition makes Nina has strange hallucinations.

The symptoms of schizophrenia found in this research, indicates levels of hallucination by the main character. The hallucinations experienced by Nina as if she sees, feels, and hears something that actually do not happen to her. Start from the hallucination happen in the first time she feels that sees someone similar her until she is killing herself as she had kill her competitor.

The levels of hallucination becomes something mysterious, strange, and event horror. It can shows from the dramatic structure start from exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution. That is why this film to be one of film has a genre psychological thriller film. This film also received five Academy Award nominations and Portman won Best Actress, also Aronofsky nominated for the Best Director then the film is nominated for Best Picture.

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